
BILL NO: Senate Bill 17
TITLE: Criminal Procedure – Expungement of Records – Good Cause
COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings
HEARING DATE: February 2, 2023
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

Senate Bill 17 would alter the Court and Judicial Proceedings Article to add the ability to seek expungement of a court or criminal record for good cause. The Women’s Law Center (WLC) supports SB 17 because we believe in second chances and this bill would allow for a person to be heard and perhaps be granted expungement if their individual circumstances merit it.

Over the past several years the Legislature has modified the state’s expungement laws, generally to allow for expungement in increased circumstances. Senate Bill 17 would add this simple provision. The person seeking expungement would have to convince a court that good cause exists to expunge their criminal charge. For the purposes of the WLC, this bill does not alter any expungement for criminal convictions of domestically related crimes. Those domestically related crimes, perpetrated against a specific victim, must adhere to existing laws on expungement. And SB 17 will not flood the courts with requests as other provisions apply in certain circumstances.

Therefore, the Women’s Law Center urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 17.

The Women’s Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, membership organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. Our mission is to ensure the physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy of women in Maryland. We advance our mission through direct legal representation, information and referral hotlines, and advocacy.